

APPENDIX 6

Emergency Closure and Restriction Order

To protect the safety of the public and the welfare of wildlife it is necessary to close and restrict the use of a public trail easement reserved to the U. S. under Sec. 17(b) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, 43 U. S. C. Sec. 1616(b), in Interim Conveyance No. 045 issued to the Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation on November 18, 1978. This 17(b) easement is identified as Easement Identification No. 1 C5, E, and is located east of Barrow, Alaska, from Niksiirak to Plover Point. This action is taken pursuant to 43 CFR 8364.1 and is necessary because of the unprecedented number of polar bears in the area. The closure and restriction is consistent with the formal request from the Mayor of the North Slope Borough on September 17, 2002, and recommendations from the North Slope Borough, Department of Wildlife Management, the Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government and the Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation.

What is the reason for the closure and restrictions? A very unusual, high concentration of polar bears in the area has created a public safety hazard through the increased risk of bear-human conflicts.

What lands, roads, trails or waterways are closed or the use restricted? The 17(b) easement is closed to access from Niksiirak to Plover Point. Refer to the attached map.

What specific uses are restricted? The trail easement is closed to travel by the general public.

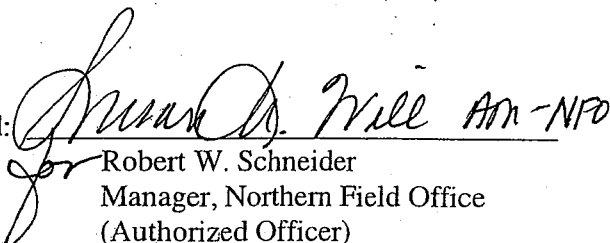
When will the closure and restriction be in effect? The closure and restriction is effective from September 23, 2002, and will remain in effect until May 1, 2003, or unless revoked earlier by the authorized officer.

Who is exempt from the closure or restriction? Any Federal, State or local government officer or member of an organized rescue or fire suppression force in the performance of an official duty is exempt from this order.

Where will this order be posted? This order will be posted in the BLM Northern Field Office in Fairbanks, Alaska, the Barrow Post Office and other public places, and at the beginning of the closed trail easement.

For further information contact: Craig McCaa, Public Affairs
(907) 474-2231

Signed:


for Robert W. Schneider
Manager, Northern Field Office
(Authorized Officer)

9/23/02

Date

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[AK-023-02-1410-HY-011L-241A; F-14836-EE]

Public Easement Closure; Prohibition of All Activities

AGENCY: Northern Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, Fairbanks, Alaska.

ACTION: Notice to the public of a temporary closure of a public easement [17(b) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, 43 U.S.C. Sec. 1616(b)] administered by the Northern Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, Alaska.

SUMMARY: This notice closes a 17(b) easement identified as Easement Identification Number 1 C5, E. The easement is located east of Barrow, Alaska, from Niksiirak to Plover Point. This closure notice is necessary to protect humans from an unprecedented number of polar bears in the area. The welfare of the polar bear population around Barrow, Alaska also necessitates this closure action.

Discussion of this closure has taken place between BLM, the North Slope Borough, Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation, and the Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government.

DATES: This closure is effective September 23, 2002, and will be in effect until May 1, 2003, unless revoked earlier by the Authorized Officer.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Additional information concerning the closure may be obtained from Craig McCaa, Public Affairs, BLM Northern Field Office, 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844. Mr. McCaa may be reached at (907) 474-2231 or at 1-800-437-7021, x2231, or at Craig--McCaa@ak.blm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

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Closure Order

1. Authority: 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 8364.1.
2. Closure: The following described lands are closed to all activity.

Lands Affected

Sec. 12 & 13, T. 23 N., R. 18 W., and Sec. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 18, 32 and 33, T. 23 N., R. 17 W., of the Umiat Meridian, approximately 1 acre.

Dated: September 24, 2002.
Susan M. Will,

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Associate Field Manager, Northern Field Office, Bureau of Land
Management.

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For Immediate Release

News Release No. F-02-11

Date: September 24, 2002

Contact for additional information:

Craig McCaa

Tel: (907) 474-2231



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Northern Field Office

Public Affairs Office
1150 University Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

Tel: (907)474-2231

Fax (907)474-2238

Polar Bear Concerns Lead to Closure of Public Easement near Barrow

The Bureau of Land Management yesterday closed a public trail easement east of Barrow, Alaska, due to safety concerns over the unusually high number of polar bears in the area.

The emergency closure came in response to requests from the North Slope Borough, the Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government and the Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation. Local officials expressed concerns about recent interactions between people and the estimated 60 polar bears that have converged on a pile of whale bones and carcasses near Point Barrow. One bear had to be shot last Friday after it repeatedly entered the village of Barrow.

UIC, which owns the land surrounding the trail easement, has also closed access to the area frequented by the bears.

The closure affects the area between Niksiirak and Plover Point. The general public is prohibited from traveling on the easement until May 1, 2003. BLM will revoke the closure earlier if the bears no longer pose a safety hazard.

For further information, please contact Craig McCaa at 907-474-2231, or by e-mail at Craig_McCaa@ak.blm.gov.

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